

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 CU-04 AID-20 DRC-01

COME-00 /146 W

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R 050820Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9069

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 11904

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT,ID

SUBJECT: MARRIAGE BILL ROUNDUP

REF : JAKARTA 11583

SUMMARY: AMID REPORTS THAT ISLAMIC MEMBERS MAY
INITIATE BOYCOTT OF MARRIAGE BILL IN PARLIAMENT,
HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN MEETING WITH
MOSLEM LEADERS IN EFFORT (THUS FAR FRUITLESS)
TO FIND A WAY OUT OF ONGOING CONTROVERSY. MEANWHILE
150 STUDENTS PAID PEACEFUL VISIT TO JAKARTA
POLICE HEADQUARTERS AND CALLED FOR SPEEDY RELEASE
OF ELEVEN YOUTHS DETAINED FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 27
DEMONSTRATION. END SUMMARY

1. MEMBERS OF ISLAMIC (UNITY DEVELOPMENT) PARTY IN
PARLIAMENT TOLD PRESS OCT 4 THAT PARTY
WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN FINAL STAGE OF DEBATE ON
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MARRIAGE BILL SCHEDULED FOR MID-NOVEMBER

WITHOUT ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION WITH GOVERNMENT FIRST. HOWEVER MEMBERS ALSO STATED THAT POINTS REGARDING RELIGIOUS LAW COULD NOT BE DISCUSSED EXCEPT BY RELIGIOUS EXPERTS, AND SOME REITERATED FLAT DEMAND THAT ALL PASSAGES OF BILL WHICH ARE JUDGED TO BE IN CONFLICT WITH RELIGION BE DROPPED. THEY URGED GOVERNMENT TO RECONSIDER SUBMITTING "BASIC MARRIAGE LAW" PLUS SEPARATE LAWS FOR VARIOUS RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES INSTEAD OF PRESENT UNITARY BILL (I.E., SIMILAR TO PACKAGE WHICH BECAME HOPELESSLY STALLED IN PRE-1971 PARLIAMENT.) SOME MEMBERS ARE GOING FURTHER AND SUGGESTING THAT MOSLEM MP'S SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN FORTHCOMING DISCUSSION OF BILL BY RELIGION AND

JUSTICE COMMITTEES SCHEDULED TO BEGIN OCTOBER 8. (COMMENT: IT NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER ISLAMIC PARTY LEADERS' MINTAREDJA, NAROCCT AL WOULD GO ALONG WITH THIS PROPOSED BOYCOTT. IF NOT, IT MIGHT HAPPEN WITHOUT THEM.)

2. MEANWHILE ABOUT 150 STUDENTS AND MOSLEM YOUTHS FROM VARIETY OF AD HOC ANTI-MARRIAGE LAW GROUPS PAID PEACEFUL VISIT TO JAKARTA POLICE HEADQUARTERS AND REQUESTED SPEEDY RELEASE OF ELEVEN OF THEIR COMPANIONS WHO THEY SAY WERE ARRESTED AFTER SEPTEMBER 27 DEMONSTRATION AT PARLIAMENT. DELEGATION LEADERS WERE RECEIVED BY SUBORDINATE OF ABSENT POLICE CHIEF WIDODO WHO SAID HE WOULD CONVEY THEIR WISHES TO HIGHER AUTHORITY. ACCORDING ONE GROUP OF STUDENTS, POLICE OFFICIAL WOULD NOT CONFIRM NUMBER OF DETAINEES BUT PROMISED THAT THEY WERE BEING WELL TREATED.

3. LEADER OF HMI (STRONGEST MODERNIST ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY STUDENT GROUP) TOLD EMBOFF THAT DEPUTY ARMED FORCES COMMANDER GENERAL SUMITRO SUMMONED MEETING OF SEVEN MAJOR FIGURES FROM BANNED MASJUMI PARTY (INCLUDING MOH. NATSIR, SJAFRUDDIN PRAWIRANEGARA, KASMAN SINGODIMEDJO, AND CHIEF JAKARTA IMAM, DR. HAMKA) ON SEPT 30. SUMITRO
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TOLD THEM THAT HE WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED BY REPORTS THAT THEY WERE BEHIND ANTI-MARRIAGE BILL AGITATION WITH SUBVERSIVE INTENT. MASJUMI FIGURES SAID THEY WERE NOT INCITING ANYTHING, ARGUING THAT RESPONSE IS SPONTANEOUS REACTION FROM MOSLEM MASSES. THEY DENIED ANY EFFORT TO REVIVE ISLAMIC STATE ISSUE OR OPPOSE STATE IDEOLOGY PANACASILA, AFFIRMING THAT ALONG

WITH VIRTUALLY ALL INDONESIANS THEY ACCEPT IT.

4. ACCORDING SAHS SOURCE HMI AND OTHER STUDENT GROUPS HAVE BEEN SUMMONED BY INTELLIGENCE (BAKIN) CHIEF GENERAL SUTOPO JUWONO AND ASKED TO HELP IN CALMING DOWN LEVEL OF TENSION. SUTOPO EXPRESSED REGRET AT SOME EXTREME STATEMENTS BY GOLKAR SUPPORTERS OF BILL (E.G., ALLEGATION BY GOLKAR WHIP SOEGIHARTO THAT RELIGIOUS LAW IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH MODERNITY). HMI LEADERS' RESPONSE WAS THAT ALTHOUGH THEY WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO HELP, GRASS-ROOTS RELIGIOUS FEELING ON THIS SUBJECT HAS BECOME FIXED FAR BEYOND THEIR POWERS TO ALTER. SOURCE MENTIONED FACT THAT IN MOSQUES ALL OVER INDONESIA, IMAMS ARE NOW RADING A SPECIAL PRAYER USED ONLY WHEN THE KORAN IS IN DANGER.

4. SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF THAT IN HIS OPINION, GOVERNMENT GENUINELY WANTS TO FIND A WAY OUT OF CONTROVERSY WHICH SHOWS NO SIGNS OF SUBSIDING. HOWEVER, HE SAID, GOVENMENT IS STILL THINKING IN TERMS OF "RE-EDITING" A FEW PASSAGES HERE AND THERE, WHILE MOSLEMS ARE NOW LOCKED INTO DEMAND (WHICH HE AGREES IS UNRZISONABLE) THAT ALL PASSAGES JUDGED TO BE IN CONFLICT WITH RELIGIOUS LAW - "ABOUT 70 PCT OF THE BILL" - MUST BE DROPPED. HE AGREED WITH JUDGEMENT EXPRESSED EARLIER (REFTEL) THAT NO COMPROMISE YET IN SIGHT. GALBRAITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973JAKART11904
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS GALBRAITH
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731048/aaaabjha.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: JAKARTA 11583
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16-Oct-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <17-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARRIAGE BILL ROUNDUP
TAGS: PINT, ID
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005